

Message Text

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ACTION SNM-02

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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1039

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 0614

FOR S/NM AMBASSADOR VANCE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OTRA BM

SUBJ: AMBASSADOR VANCE'S VISIT TO BURMA

REF: RANGOON 0535

1. COLONEL TIN OO HAS ASKED ME TO TELL YOU AGAIN HOW MUCH HE LOOKS FORWARD TO YOUR VISIT IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE KUALA LUMPUR CONFERENCE, AND TO EXPRESS THE HOPE THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO STAY IN BURMA AT LEAST THREE, AND IF POSSIBLE FOUR, DAYS. HE THINKS IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO TAKE YOU UPCOUNTRY FOR A FIRST-HAND LOOK AT SOME TYPICAL SHAN STATE TERRAIN, PERHAPS FROM AN AMERICAN-SUPPLIED HELICOPTER. IN ADDITION, HE THINKS IT WOULD BE ADVANTAGEOUS TO GIVE YOU SOME-WHAT BROADER EXPOSURE WITHIN THE CIVILIAN STRUCTURE OF THE ANTI-NARCOTICS PROGRAM IN BURMA.

2. COMMENT: COLONEL TIN OO OF COURSE HAS HIS OWN MOTIVES FOR WANTING TO STRETCH YOUR VISIT AND BROADEN YOUR EXPOSURE IN THESE WAYS. HE REGARDS MUTUAL CONFIDENCE AND RAPPORT OF THE SORT HE FEELS HE HAS BEEN ABLE TO DEVELOP WITH YOU AS FUNDAMENTAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THE ANTI-NARCOTICS PROGRAM, AND WANTS TO STRENGTHEN YOUR CONFIDENCE IN THE GOOD FAITH OF THE BURMESE BY SHOWING YOU AS MUCH OF THEIR EFFORT AS POSSIBLE. AT THE SAME TIME, HE DOES NOT WANT THE COOPERATIVE BASE OF OUR PROGRAM TO BE TOO NARROWLY LOCALIZED IN HIS OWN PERSON, SO HE WANTS TO PUT YOU IN TOUCH WITH THE CIVILIAN OFFICIALS CONCERNED. FROM OUR STANDPOINT ALSO, THE EXTRA DAY OR SO WOULD APPEAR TO BE A VERY GOOD INVESTMENT IF YOU CAN SPARE THE TIME. THE VISIT TO THE SHAN STATE WOULD NOT BE MERE SIGHTSEEING.

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YOU WOULD NOT ONLY ACQUIRE A FIRST-HAND APPRECIATION OF THE TERRAIN

DIFFICULTIES, BUT ALSO HAVE A CHANCE TO MEET SOME OF THE PEOPLE,
CIVILIAN AS WELL AS MILITARY, INVOLVED IN THE PROGRAM AT THE GRASS
ROOTS LEVEL.

3. PLEASE ADVISE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE FIRM DATES FOR YOUR VISIT TO
BURMA. HELENKA AND I ARE OF COURSE ASSUMING YOU WILL ACCEPT OUR
HOSPITALITY WHILE IN RANGOON.
OSBORN

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